



9 January 2007

**Martin Luther King, Jr., Day
Holiday Weekend Safety**

1. On 15 January 2007 our country will celebrate its commitment to civil rights by honoring a great clergyman, civil rights leader, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This day offers an opportunity to contemplate the ideals fostered by Dr. King and pay tribute to a great American.

2. I have designated 12 January as a USAREUR Training Holiday to give ample opportunity for us to enjoy some well-deserved time off, recharge our spirits, and spend time with families and friends. As with every long holiday weekend, I ask each of you to remain vigilant. Let us repeat the success we had between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day with no serious or fatal accidents.

3. Unfortunately, during the first week of this new year, we lost two Soldiers in a catastrophic POV accident near Hohenfels, Germany. The United States Army Combat Readiness Center has sent a team to investigate the accident, and we will have more information once the investigation is completed. Initial reports indicate that the Soldiers were traveling at high speed (160 kilometers per hour) in the early morning hours (0435)—factors which put those involved at high risk. The driver, a noncommissioned officer, survived; however, he will likely be haunted by the memory of this tragedy for the rest of his life.



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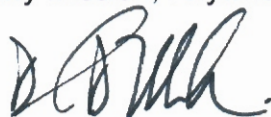
4. We must not allow this tragic beginning to set the trend for the rest of the year. I challenge each of you to make a self evaluation and ask yourself some critical questions about your behavior. I also ask you to embrace the concept of responsibility—personal, professional, and organizational. This concept will allow us to become better Soldiers, overcome challenges, support our Nation's goals, and win the Global War on Terrorism.

- **Personal Responsibility.** We must accept *personal responsibility* for our actions, especially when no one is watching over our shoulder, directing our actions, or standing by to help out. This means not getting behind the wheel of a car after drinking alcoholic beverages, not driving too fast for conditions, and not taking unnecessary risks. This also applies to our activities and interaction with family and friends.


- **Professional Responsibility.** Whether following procedures “by the book” or participating in required safety training, *professional responsibility* dictates that we do the right thing commensurate with the professional status that comes from wearing a uniform. Every Soldier at every level should understand what professional responsibility means and act accordingly. This will support the greater good of the unit and contribute to the overall success of any operation, no matter how routine. Knowing that others depend on us to properly and professionally execute our duties is strong motivation to act accordingly and with pride.

- **Organizational Responsibility.** Each cohesive unit has an *organizational responsibility* to fulfill its functions. This sometimes means taking care of others in the unit and going the extra mile to ensure everyone returns safely after a long holiday weekend. This may also involve establishing programs to help ensure that Soldiers always have an option for safe transportation if they fail to properly plan ahead.

5. Our goal during this upcoming long weekend is *No Loss of Life*. Let us continue the positive trend in accident reduction we had established by the end of 2006. Have a wonderful holiday, but practice Composite Risk Management to standard in everything you do, on and off duty. Taking care of ourselves and those in our charge is our responsibility. Accepting this responsibility exemplifies our motto to execute with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere.



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